

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5998

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 18499

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, UR, NO, SW, FI, XZ

SUBJ: THE KOSYGIN INCIDENT AND SOVIET NORDIC POLICY

REF: (A) OSLO 5592, (B) OSLO 5470, (C) STOCKHOLM 5208,

(D) STOCKHOLM 5207, (E) MOSCOW 14194

SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION: WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO GATHER
SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING KOSYGIN'S
ATTACK ON NORWAY DURING THE FINNISH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRA-
TIONS BEYOND WHAT HAS BEEN REPORTED FROM OUR NORDIC POSTS.
BASICALLY WE DO NOT VIEW KOSYGIN'S OUTBURST AS AN ABERATION, BUT
RATHER AS A PLANNED GESTURE DESIGNED TO DRAMATIZE SOVIET
DISPLEASURE WITH THE STATE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH
NORWAY, AND IN PARTICULAR WITH THE NEED TO TREAT
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NORWEGIAN AFFAIRS IN AN OVERALL NORDIC CONTEXT.
ALTHOUGH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THE ATMOSPHERICS OF THE
MEETING MAY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY KOSYGIN'S PERSONAL
PIQUE AND THE UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE
MEETING TOOK PLACE, WE THINK THE SUBSTANCE AND OVER-
ALL TONE ARE NOT INCONSISTENT WITH SOVIET POLICY. END
SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION.

1. KOSYGIN'S REMARKS ARE THE LATEST AND MOST DRAMATIC EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIETS CONSIDER THAT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO SPECIAL STATUS AND A SPECIAL RIGHT OF CONSULTATION IN THE NORDIC AREA AND THAT THEIR VIEWS MUST RECEIVE A PROPER CONSIDERATION BY THE SCANDINAVIANS AND FINLAND. THE SOVIETS HAVE CONSISTENTLY TRIED TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN NORDIC AFFAIRS AND TO SUGGEST THAT THEY ARE IN FACT VIRTUALLY A NORDIC COUNTRY THEMSELVES. IN THIS CONTEXT THEY HAVE PRESSED FOR REGULAR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL ONLY WITH THE DANES. IN THIS SENSE KOSYGIN'S HELSINKI "CONFERENCE" CAN BE CONSIDERED AN IMPROPTU ATTEMPT TO INITIATE SUCH "REGIONAL" CONSULTATIONS.

2. A SECOND ELEMENT IN KOSYGIN'S REMARKS WHICH STRIKES US AS MOST SIGNIFICANT AND CONSISTENT WITH SOVIET POLICY IS THE VERY RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION WHICH WAS GIVEN TO THE NORWEGIAN SECURITY POLICIES. KOSYGIN WAS, IN EFFECT, TELLING THE NORWEGIANS THAT THEIR SECURITY POLICIES WERE BEING INTERPRETED BY THE SOVIETS IN A MANNER DIFFERENT FROM THE OFFICIAL SOVIET INTERPRETATION AND THAT THE SOVIET INTERPRETATION MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. IN A LARGER SENSE THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN MAKING THIS SAME POINT IN VIRTUALLY EVERY CONFIDENTIAL

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NORDIC ISSUE ON WHICH THEY HAVE SPOKEN IN RECENT YEARS. THEY HAVE REMINDED THE FINNS UNOFFICIALLY THAT THERE IS IN FACT A SOVIET INTERPRETATION OF THE 1948 TREATY AND THAT THE FINNS WOULD DO WELL TO KEEP THIS IN MIND WHEN ENUNCIATING THEIR OWN OFFICIAL POLICY ON THE TREATY (SEE 76 MOSCOW 14194).

3. SIMILARLY WHEN DISCUSSING SVALBARD WITH THE NORWEGIANS THE SOVIETS HAVE TAKEN THE MOST RESTRICTIVE POSSIBLE VIEW OF THE 1920 TREATY THAT GRANTED THE NORWEGIANS SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ARCHIPELAGO. HERE AGAIN THEIR POINT HAS BEEN THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE SPECIAL STATUS AND THAT THEIR INTERPRETATION MUST BE GIVEN SPECIAL CONSIDERATION. IT WOULD NOW APPEAR THAT KOSYGIN IS MAKING A SIMILAR STATEMENT WITH RESPECT TO NORWAY'S SECURITY POLICIES AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO.

4. ALTHOUGH THIS SOVIET POLICY WITH RESPECT TO THE NORDIC COUNTRIES EXPLAINS THE SUBSTANCE OF KOSYGIN'S REMARKS, IT DOES NOT ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF THEIR TIMING. AS WE SEE IT THERE WAS AMPLE REASON FROM

THE SOVIET POINT OF VIEW TO MAKE THEIR CONCERNS KNOWN
AT THE PRESENT TIME. FIRST, WE ARE COMING TO THE
END OF A YEAR IN WHICH THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO
POSITIVE MOVEMENT IN SOVIET-NORWEGIAN RELATIONS
AND A NUMBER OF THE MOST VEXING ISSUES HAVE BEEN
STALLED BECAUSE OF NORWAY'S UNWILLINGNESS TO GIVE
IN TO SOVIET DESIRES. SECONDLY, WITH THE NORWEGIAN
ELECTIONS OUT OF THE WAY SOVIETS CAN NOW MAKE THEIR
FEELINGS KNOWN TO A GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL LIKELY REMAIN
IN POWER FOR SOME TIME. THIRDLY, THE NOVEMBER 23 FOREIGN
POLICY STATEMENT OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT, GAVE
NO INDICATION THAT THE SOVIETS COULD EXPECT NEW GON
INITIATIVES TO RESOLVE THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES.
FOURTHLY, THE GON OVER THE PAST YEAR HAS, IN THE
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SOVIET VIEW, INCREASED ITS TIES WITH NATO AND,
IN PARTICULAR, WITH THAT EUROPEAN NATO MEMBER TOWARDS WHICH
THE SOVIETS HAVE THE GREATEST PHOBIA, GERMANY. AND,
FINALLY, IF BILATERAL PRESSURE ON THE GON HAS THUS
FAR BEEN INEFFECTIVE, AN ATTEMPT AT USING THE OTHER
NORDIC STATES TO BRING ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON NORWAY
MIGHT POSSIBLY HAVE BENEFICIAL RESULTS FROM THE
SOVIET POINT OF VIEW. FOR THESE REASONS PLUS THE
FACT THAT THE HELSINKI CELEBRATIONS WERE THE ONLY CON-
VENIENT OCCASION TO MAKE SUCH A PROTEST WITH THE
OTHERS PRESENT, THE SOVIETS CHOSE TO LET KOSYGIN
DELIVER IT WHEN HE DID.

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ACTION EUR-12

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5. EVEN IF KOSYGIN'S REMARKS WERE CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING SOVIET STRATEGY IN THE AREA, THEY CERTAINLY REPRESENT A NEW TACTICAL APPROACH. IT MAY WELL BE THAT NO NEW DRAMATIC MOVES BY THE SOVIETS WILL FOLLOW THIS OUTBURST. IN THIS CASE THE FUROR WILL DIE DOWN AND THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE NORDIC COUNTRIES WILL CONTINUE AS BEFORE: GOOD WITH FINLAND AND SWEDEN, FAIR WITH DENMARK, AND POOR WITH NORWAY.

6. AT THE OTHER EXTREME, IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THE SOVIETS WILL ARGUE THAT THE STATE OF RELATIONS WITH THE NORDIC COUNTRIES HAS BEEN SO COMPLICATED BY THE INTRANSIGENCE OF THE NORWEGIANS THAT SOVIETS MUST NOW INVOKE THE CONSULTATION RIGHTS WITH FINLAND WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN THE 1948 TREATY. THIS WOULD BE A CONFIDENTIAL

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CONTINUATION OF THE DRAMATIC, KOSYGIN APPROACH SINCE IT WOULD BE A VERY SERIOUS STEP, UNSETTLING BOTH TO SOVIET-FINNISH RELATIONS AND TO SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE OTHER NORDICS.

7. A LESS DRAMATIC POLICY WOULD INVOLVE A SOVIET FOLLOW UP TO THE KOSYGIN INITIATIVE BY APPLYING ADDITIONAL BILATERAL PRESSURE AND TRYING TO ESTABLISH REGULAR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE NORDIC COUNTRIES ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION CAN BEST BE REMEDIED BY A COMBINATION OF BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL TALKS AMONG ALL CONCERNED.

8. OUR INITIAL ESTIMATE IS THAT THE SOVIETS WILL PROBABLY NOT WISH TO INVOKE CONSULTATIONS WITH FINLAND UNDER THE 1948 TREATY, BUT WILL RATHER CONTINUE TO PRESSURE THE NORWEGIANS BILATERALLY AND TO POINT OUT IN REGULAR DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS THAT NORWEGIAN INTRANSIGENCE HAS AN OVERALL EFFECT ON SOVIET RELATIONS WITH ITS NORDIC NEIGHBORS. IN THIS MANNER THEY WOULD HOPE TO DRIVE WEDGES OVER NORWEGIAN SECURITY POLICY

BETWEEN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES AND THUS ATTEMPT TO GAIN
ADDITIONAL LEVERAGE ON NORWAY TO MODIFY ITS POLICY.
AN ELEMENT IN THIS APPROACH WOULD INCLUDE ADDITIONAL
SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH REGULAR CONSULTATIONS WITH THE
NORDIC STATES AND, OPTIMALLY, TO GET THEM TO AGREE TO
CONSULT WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN A NORDIC-PLUS-SOVIET
GROUPING. (THIS LATTER IS ONLY A LONG-TERM GOAL,
NOT AN IMMEDIATE, REALISTIC EXPECTATION OF THE
SOVIETS.)

9. FINALLY, WE NOTE THAT THE SOVIET UNION SEES
LITTLE REASON TO OFFER ANY COMPROMISE OF ITS POSITIONS
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ON ANY OF THE MAJOR ISSUES BETWEEN ITSELF AND THE
NORDIC COUNTRIES. THIS OFTEN PRODUCES AN EFFECT
COUNTER TO THAT DESIRED BY THE SOVIETS SINCE IT TENDS
TO ENFORCE INTRANSIGENCE RATHER THAN ALLEVIATE
IT. AS OUR NORWEGIAN COLLEAGUE HERE POINTED OUT, IT
IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF GREAT POWER INSENSITIVITY
COMPLICATING RELATIONS WITH SMALLER NEIGHBORS
WHEN IN FACT THE GREAT POWER'S MAJOR OBJECTIVE IS
TO IMPROVE THOSE RELATIONSHIPS, ALBEIT ON TERMS
FAVORABLE TO ITSELF. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS UNFORTU-
NATELY ALSO TRUE THAT OVER TIME THE SOVIET HEAVY-
HANDED APPROACH IS SOMETIMES EFFECTIVE IN MODERATING SOME
ASPECTS OF NORDIC POLICIES, IF ONLY TO PLACATE THE USSR.

10. WE WELCOME ADDRESSEES COMMENTS.
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